

I. AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

*This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application, using strikethrough for deletions and underlining for additions:*

1-5 and 6-14 (Cancelled).

15. (Currently Amended) A data processing method using a computer network for converting vehicle environmental performance data into meaningful and readily understandable information for use by consumers as an aid in their selection of a vehicle for purchase and by vehicle manufacturers to facilitate awareness of their vehicles through advertising, said method comprising the steps of:

obtaining said vehicle environmental performance data and storing said data in at least one database;

identifying vehicles by vehicle manufacturers, brands, and models;

identifying said vehicle models by vehicle configurations;

establishing vehicle utility classes for said vehicles;

grouping said vehicle models into said vehicle utility classes to allow evaluation of environmental performance of said vehicle models by said vehicle utility classes;

developing forecasts of sales of said vehicle configurations;

identifying vehicle environmental performance data components;

obtaining environmental performance values for said environmental performance data components by said vehicle configurations and storing said values in said at least one database;

developing environmental performance scores for said vehicle models by sales-weighting said environmental performance values of said environmental data components by said forecasts of sales;

ranking said vehicles by comparing said environmental performance scores of said vehicle models in said vehicle utility classes to identify top performers of said vehicle models in said vehicle utility classes and storing said top performers in said at least one database;

establishing an Internet web site; and

using said Internet web site to communicate said top performers from said at least one database to aid said consumers in their vehicle purchasing decisions.

16. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 15, further comprising the step of:

further developing said environmental performance scores by component-weighting said environmental performance scores by said environmental performance data components according to at least one of life cycle analysis results and a judgment of the severity of environmental impacts of said environmental performance data components.

17. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 15, further comprising the step of:

licensing use of at least one of a list of said top performers, a logo, and an award to at least one of said manufacturers.

18. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 15, further comprising the step of:

ranking said vehicles by comparing said environmental performance scores of said vehicle models to identify top performers of said vehicle brands.

19. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 18, further comprising the step of:  
ranking said vehicles by comparing said environmental performance scores of  
said vehicle models to identify top performers of said vehicle manufacturers.
20. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 15 wherein said ranking said vehicles step  
includes said top performers being a predetermined top percentile of said vehicle models by  
said vehicle utility classes.
21. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 20 further comprising the step of:  
presenting awards to manufacturers of said predetermined top percentile of  
said vehicle models.
22. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 20 wherein said ranking step includes said  
top percentile being a top quartile of said vehicle models by said vehicle utility classes.
23. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 20 wherein said ranking step includes said  
top percentile being the best of said vehicle models, in environmental performance, by said  
vehicle utility classes.
24. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 15 wherein said grouping step includes  
said vehicle utility classes including car classes and light truck classes.

25. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 24 wherein said car classes include subcompact, compact, mid-size, full-size, premium, luxury, and sports car, and further wherein said light truck classes include minivan, full-size van, compact pickup, full-size pickup, compact sport utility vehicle, mid-size sport utility vehicle, and full-size sport utility vehicle.

26. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 15 wherein said step of identifying vehicle environmental performance data components includes identifying a fuel consumption component that is convertible to a miles-per-gallon equivalency component for electric vehicles using a watt-hours of energy per gallon of fuel conversion factor.

27. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 15 wherein said step of identifying vehicle environmental performance data components includes identifying a solid waste and material consumption component, and further wherein said step of obtaining environmental performance values includes obtaining recycled content values.

28. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 27, further comprising the step of:  
verifying the accuracy of at least a portion of said vehicle environmental performance data using an independent auditor to audit said at least a portion of said vehicle environmental performance data.

29. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 15, further comprising the step of:  
verifying the accuracy of at least a portion of said vehicle environmental performance data using an independent auditor to audit said at least a portion of said vehicle environmental performance data.

30. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 27 wherein said step of obtaining recycled content values includes obtaining recycled content in weight values of given vehicle configurations by multiplying recycled content percentages of said given vehicle configurations by curb weights of said given vehicle configurations.

31. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 30 wherein said step of weighting said environmental performance values includes multiplying said weight values of said given vehicle configurations by percentages of sales of said vehicle models that said given vehicle configurations represent.

32. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 31 further comprising the step of:  
further weighting said environmental performance scores by said environmental performance data components according to at least one of life cycle analysis results and a judgment of the severity of environmental impacts of said environmental performance data components, wherein said solid waste and material consumption component is weighted at about ten percent of said scores.

33. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 15 wherein said step of obtaining environmental performance values includes obtaining certification values from government air pollution certification values.

34. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 33 wherein said step of identifying vehicle environmental performance data components includes identifying an air pollution component and said method further comprises the step of further weighting said environmental performance scores by said environmental performance data components according to life cycle analysis results and a judgment of the severity of environmental impacts of said environmental performance data components, wherein said air pollution component represents about fifty percent of said scores.

35. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 34 wherein said air pollution component is component-weighted by substantially equal parts of photochemical pollutants and toxicant pollutants.

36. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 35 wherein said photochemical pollutants are weighted by substantially equal parts of NO<sub>x</sub> and NMHC and said toxicants are weighted by substantially equal parts of CO and particulate matter.

37. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 33 wherein the percentage of sales that each vehicle configuration represents within its respective vehicle model is multiplied by a certification value for said each vehicle configuration.

38. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 15 wherein said step of obtaining environmental performance values includes obtaining miles-per-gallon values from government data.

39. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 38 wherein said step of identifying vehicle environmental performance data components includes identifying a fuel consumption component and said method further comprises the step of further weighting said environmental performance scores by said environmental performance data components according to at least one of life cycle analysis results and a judgment of the severity of environmental impacts of said environmental performance data components, wherein said fuel consumption component is weighted at about forty percent of said scores.

40. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 38 wherein said fuel consumption component is calculated by multiplying the percentage of sales that each vehicle configuration represents within its respective vehicle model by a miles-per-gallon value for said each vehicle configuration.

41. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 40 wherein said fuel consumption component is further calculated according to the following:

$$(1/M_1 - 1/M_X) / (1/M_1 - 1/M_2);$$

where

$M_1$  = lowest vehicle configuration mileage in all vehicle utility classes

$M_X$  = sales-weighted mileage of the vehicle model

$M_2$  = highest vehicle configuration mileage in all vehicle utility classes.

42. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 15 wherein said step of obtaining said vehicle environmental performance data involves obtaining said data from at least one of a government source and a manufacturer source.

43. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 15 wherein said step of developing forecasts of sales involves developing said forecasts substantially concurrently with a beginning of a vehicle model year.

44. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 15 wherein said communicating step involves using the Internet to freely communicate said results.

45. (Currently Amended) A data processing method using a computer network for converting environmental performance data into meaningful and readily understandable information for use by consumers as an aid in their selection of a product or service for purchase and by businesses to facilitate awareness and consideration of their products or services through advertising, said method comprising the steps of:

obtaining said environmental performance data and storing said data in at least one database;

identifying products or services by business entities, brands, and models;

identifying said models by configurations;

establishing utility classes for said products or services;



grouping said models into said utility classes to allow evaluation of environmental performance of said models by said utility classes;

developing forecasts of sales of said configurations;

identifying environmental performance data components;

obtaining environmental performance values for said environmental performance data components by said configurations and storing said values in said at least one database;

developing environmental performance scores for said models by sales-weighting said environmental performance values of said environmental data components by said forecasts of sales;

ranking said products or services by comparing said environmental performance scores of said models in said utility classes to identify top performers of said models in said utility classes and storing said top performers in said at least one database;

establishing an Internet web site; and

using said Internet web site to communicate said top performers from said at least one database to aid said consumers in their purchasing decisions.

46. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 45, further comprising the step of:

further developing said environmental performance scores by component-weighting said environmental performance scores by said environmental performance data components according to at least one of life cycle analysis results and a judgment of the severity of environmental impacts of said environmental performance data components.

47. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 45, further comprising the step of:  
  
licensing use of at least one of a list of said top performers, a logo, and an  
  
award to said business entities.

48. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 45, further comprising the step of:  
  
ranking said products or services by comparing said environmental  
  
performance scores of said models to identify top performers of said brands.

49. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 48, further comprising the step of:  
  
ranking said products or services by comparing said environmental  
  
performance scores of said models to identify top performers of said business entities.

50. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 45 wherein said ranking said products or  
  
services step includes said top performers being a predetermined top percentile of said  
  
models by said utility classes.

51. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 50 further comprising the step of:  
  
presenting awards to business entities of said predetermined top percentile of  
  
said models.

52. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 50 wherein said ranking step includes said  
  
top percentile being a top quartile of said models by said utility classes.

53. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 50 wherein said ranking step includes said top percentile being the best of said models, in environmental performance, by said utility classes.

54. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 45, further comprising the step of:  
verifying the accuracy of at least a portion of said environmental performance data using an independent auditor to audit said at least a portion of said environmental performance data.

55. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 45 wherein said step of obtaining said environmental performance data involves obtaining said data from at least one of a government source and a business entity source.

56. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 45 wherein said step of developing forecasts of sales involves developing said forecasts substantially concurrently with a beginning of a product or service model year.

57. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 45 wherein said communicating step involves using the Internet to freely communicate said results.